Amateur Radio Newsline(tm) Report 1761 - May 13 2011

The following is a closed circuit advisory. With a word concerning Newsline's current finances, here's our Producer Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF.

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It's been almost 6 months since I was here to ask for financial support for Amateur Radio Newsline. Thanks to donations made through late last year we have been able to keep from bothering you for a while. And in all honesty, I prefer not to make these requests unless it's absolutely necessary as it takes time that could be better spent reporting the news.

But now its spring and all the bills from last winter have been mounting up. And, as usual, we are at the time of year when there is really not very much left in the treasury to pay them. Eventually they have got to get paid or these news reports will cease. Unfortunately, that time is now.

So how can you help? Simply take a few moments to send a donation to the Amateur Radio Newsline support fund so that we can keep these newscasts coming your way. Making a contribution is only a mouse click away if you have Pay Pal. Just go to www.arnewsline.org, scroll to the bottom of the page and click on the button marked "Make Donation." Or you can send in a contribution by mail to the Amateur Radio Newsline Support Fund, 28197 Robin Avenue, Saugus California, 91350.

Whichever way you choose, the all volunteer crew at the Amateur Radio Newsline will be eternally grateful and these newscasts will be here for you, week after week.

Once again that's the Amateur Radio Newsline Support Fund, Amateur Radio Newsline Support Fund, 28197 Robin Avenue, Saugus California, 91350. Or by Pay Pal at www.arnewsline.org

For the Support Fund, I'm Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF. Jeff.

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Than you Bill. Now, Amateur Radio Newsline report number 1761 with a release date of Friday, May 13, 2011 to follow in 5-4-3-2-1.

The following is a Q-S-T. The FCC rolls out its new Personal Localized Alerting Network and says that New York City will have it first; an experimental 4 meter beacon takes to the airwaves here in the United States, Hamvention opens its doors on Friday May 20th, Bob Heil, K9EID to have his own weekly Internet television show about ham radio and those scary Pythons are on the radio. Its not Monty Python we are talking about but you can find out the details are on Amateur Radio Newsline(tm) report number 1761 coming your way right now.

(Billboard Cart Here)

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RESCUE RADIO:  FCC SAYS ALERT WILL BE IN OPERATION 6 MONTHS EARLY IN NYC

Smartphone and other GPS enabled mobile device users in the New York City will be the first in the United States to receive emergency alerts on their handsets.  This with word that the  new FCC inspired Personal Localized Alerting Network or PLAN system will be inaugurated in the Big Apple by the end of the year.

Once in operation, it will deliver geographically targeted text messages to GPS-enabled cellular telephones.  The new system will be used for just three types of alerts.  These are ones issued by the president, alters of a life-threatening and AMBER Alerts in search of kidnapped or missing children. Participating carriers can opt out of all but the Presidential alerts.

Back in 2006 Congress directed the Federal Communications Commission to set a deadline for implementing a mobile emergency warning system. The FCC established set an April 2012 end date for participating carriers to launch the service. It will be up and running six months prior to that in New York City.

The mobile alert system was created to complement the Emergency Alert System that issues alerts using the long established broadcast TV, radio and cable delivery infrastructure.  That system is in the process of being updated to handle a Common Alerting Protocol from notifying agencies.

Already, AT&T, Sprint, T-Mobile and Verizon are on board in New York, where a late-2011 launch was announced on Tuesday, May 10th.  (FCC)

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EMERGING TECHNOLOGY:  EXPERIMENTAL US 70 MHZ BEACON ON THE AIR

A new 70 Mhz beacon is on the air from the United States East coast operating under a non-amateur experimental license and signing the call WE9XUP.  Its operating frequency is 70.005 MHz with its location atop Apple Orchard Mountain in Bedford, Virginia  at some 4200 feet above sea level.  That's Grid Square FMO7fm for those of you who chase grid squares.

WE9XUP is currently scheduled to run 24 hours a day until September 1st transmitting in Morse.  Its primary purpose is that of propagation study including  trans-Atlantic E-skip.  Reception reports go to Brian Justin via e-mail at WA1ZMS (at) arrl (dot) net.

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WORLDBEAT: WORLD RADIO DAY FEATURED ON GERMAN TV

World Amateur Radio Day took place on April 18th and was featured on German regional news reports by broadcasters WDR, NDR and HR.  All

three covered the day in news packages where  viewers saw 3 minute reports about radio amateurs in the cities of Bonn, Flensburg, Kassel and about one in a mountain hut near Wetzlar.  As a result of the TV coverage over half a million people throughout Germany got a rather positive insight into the hobby.  The theme for World Amateur Radio Day this year was "Amateur Radio: The first technology-based social network."

(Southgate)

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WORLDBEAT:  UK DIGITAL RADIO BROADCASTING TO BE DELAYED

The London Daily Mail newspaper reports that the United Kingdom has abandoned the 2015 target date to phase out analog F-M radio broadcasting in favor of all digital transmissions.  The newspaper cites a leaked government memo that reportedly suggests that a 2017 start is more likely, and that loss of analog services probably would have to be phased in by region over several more years.

According to the newspaper, the new digital radio technology has failed to grip the public's imagination as the shift to digital TV did.  It notes that there is opposition from FM loyalists who cannot see the point of moving the major stations off the analog service. It also estimates that 130 million analog radios would be made instantly obsolete by the locked in 2015 changeover date.

But there appear to be other reasons as well.  The UK uses DAB digital radio technology that requires different spectrum than analog FM. Regulators also want  stations using the DAB technology share digital transmission facilities.  But says the leaked memo, the UK radio industry probably can't afford the transmitter infrastructure costs associated with a digital switchover before 2017.  Part of the problem seems to be the need to build out local digital radio to match the coverage area of the analog FM stations. (RW, Daily Mail)

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BREAK 1

>From the United States of America, We are the Amateur Radio Newsline, heard on bulletin stations around the world including the N7ZEF Simplex Net serving Sinclair, Wyoming.

(5 sec pause here)

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THE SOCIAL SCENE:  THE DAYTON HAMVENTION SET TO OPEN MAY 20

The Dayton Hamvention is set to open on Friday, May 20th and this year the planers have added something new.  Use of social media to build excitement for the event.  Josh Long, KD8BVB, is this years Assistant General Chairman who recently spoke to Hap Holly, KC9RP, of the Rain

Report:

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KD8BVB:  "We are advertising of coarse in all of the amateur radio magazines but this year we also started out into social media.  You can find Hamvention now on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube where we are literally engaging thousands of attendees and volunteers on there.  Wr have give-aways and we solicit volunteers."

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The 2011 Dayton Hamvention runs the weekend of May 20th to the 22nd at the HARA Arena in suburban Dayton, Ohio. Amateur Radio Newsline will be hosting the annual Ham Radio Town Meeting on Saturday the 21st from 11:45 a.m. to 2 p.m. in Meeting Room 2.  Our topic this year is titled How to Make a Ham Radio Video in the 21st Century.

We will have some top names in movie making to show you how to use video to let the world know more about our service and hobby.  If you have your own home made ham radio video, please bring it along on DVD and we will be happy to show it and then to critique it for you as time allows.

Again, that's the Ham Radio Town Meeting on Saturday the 21st from 11:45 a.m. to 2 p.m. in Hara Arena Meeting Room 2. We hope to see you there.  (ARNewsline(tm), Audio courtesy of The RainReport)

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ENFORCEMENT:  FCC ISSUES OFFICIAL CITATION FOR ALLEGED SALE OF CELLPHONE AND GPS BLOCKERS

The FCC has issued an Official Citation to Internet retailer GadgetTown.com.  This for allegedly marketing in the United States unauthorized radio frequency cell phone signal blockers and GPS signal jammers in violation of section 302(b) of the Communications Act, and section 2.803 of the Commission's rules.  Amateur Radio Newsline's Norm Seeley, KI7UP, has more:

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Cellular telephone and GPS jamming devices are illegal in the USA.  And according to the Citation, its this law that lead its Enforcement Bureau initiated an investigation of GadgetTown and its marketing of several unauthorized radio frequency devices in the United States. These are identified as the Cigarette Case Cell Phone Signal Blocker, the Portable Cell Phone Signal Blocker, the 60 M Range Mountable Cell Phone Signal Blocker and the Portable Anti-Tracker GPS Signal Jammer Blocker.

The staff of the Bureau's Spectrum Enforcement Division observed that GadgetTown offered for sale the four signal jamming devices over company's web site.  On July 23, 2010, the Division issued a letter of inquiry to GadgetTown regarding those products.

The company responded to the letter on August 31, 2010 at which time it stated that it marketed the aforementioned signal jamming devices between July 1, 2010 and July 22, 2010, selling a total of 15 signal jamming devices to U.S. consumers during that period.8 In addition, GadgetTown identified the supplier and quantity of each device sold and explained that it did not manufacture any of the devices, but shipped the products directly from Shenzhen, China. Finally, GadgetTown stated that it was not aware of regulations prohibiting the import and sale of the signal jamming devices, and that since receiving notification from the Commission, it has taken steps to ensure that there will be no further prohibited items imported into the United States.

But that was not good enough for the FCC.  In the citation, the regulatory agency ordered that GadgetTown should take immediate steps to avoid any recurrence of this type of incident.  It noted that jamming devices such as these pose significant risks to public safety and other radio communications services.  It also warned GadgetTown that if after receipt of the Citation, the company violates the Communications Act or the agency's Rules by engaging in future sales of these devices that the Commission may impose monetary forfeitures.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Norm Seeley, KI7UP, in Scottsdale, Arizona.

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GadgetTown was given thirty calendar days after the May 4th release date of the Citation to file a response.  (FCC)

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ENFORCEMENT:  FCC AFFIRMS $10000 FINE TO OKLAHOMA LPFM

A $10,000 fine issued to the Enid Public Radio Association, licensee of a low-power FM radio station in Enid, Oklahoma, has progressed to a Forfeiture Order.

The penalty, originally issued in July 2010, was for airing commercials rather than underwriting announcements and for operating at an antenna height greater than authorized. KEIF-LP was fined $5,000 for selling advertisements and $5,000 for broadcasting from an antenna that was almost double the legal height.

The commission announced the affirmation of the Forfeiture Order in late April.  This after noting that nobody representing KEIF had not disputed the findings nor tried to get the fine reduced or cancelled. Therefore there was no basis on which to change the proposed penalty and the FCC must impose the total fine of $10,000.

The station was given the customary 30 days from the confirmation of the Forfeiture Order to pay or to file an appeal.  Another broadcaster, Chisholm Trail Broadcasting Co., had complained to the commission about the violations. (FCC)

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RADIO LAW:  PROPOSED REVISIONS TO CALIFORNIA ANTI-CELLPHONE WHILE DRIVING LAW COULD COST VIOLATORS BIG BUCKS

If you get caught talking or texting on a cellular telephone phone behind the wheel in California, some lawmakers say it should cost you even more money along with a penalty attached to your driving record. And they have introduced legislation to make it happen.  Amateur Radio Newsline's Jim Davis, W2JKD, reports:

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A proposed hike in the penalties imposed on driving while using anything other than a hands-free device could end up totaling hundreds of dollars for drivers caught violating the states ceellphone and texting while driving ban.

If the bill becomes law, the current $20 cell phone ticket will increase to $50.  But when you add in court costs and other administrative fees, a violation may ultimately total up to $300 or more.  A second offense would push this fine up to $500 or more.

But that's not all.  In addition to the fine the proposal would also add on one point penalty to a drivers file with the Department of Motor Vehicles each time a conviction occurrs.  This in turn could lead to significantly higher insurance rates since many if not all automotive insurers quote prices based on a persons driving record.

Also targeted by the revised law would be those who ride bicycles or other non-motorized vehicles.  The new law would penalize them with the same fines for pedaling and talking or texting on their phones while in motion.

It should be noted that the current California hands-free rule has no provision to exclude radio amateurs, C-B operators or others who use two way radios in their vehicles, but to date that aspect of the rule has not been widely enforced.

Im Jim Davis, W2JKD.

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If enacted as proposed it would become one of the nations toughest anti-cellphone while driving law.   (Published news reports)

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HAM MILESTONES:  SOTA PASSES MILLIONTH QSO

Some big news for hams who like to operate portable off of tall rocks called mountains.  Here's Jeramy Boot, G4NJH with the details:

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Summits on the Air recently passed a significant milestone with its millionth QSO being made over the recent holiday period.

SOTA started in 2002 and has now grown into a worldwide award scheme with 55 associations across the world and around 44,000 qualifying summits.

I'm Jeramy Boot and you are tuned to the Amateur Radio Newsline.

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For more information on the scheme, check out the internet at www.sota.org.uk.  (GB2RS)

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RADIO CHANGES: W8BBA FALLS SILENT AFTER 50 YEARS SERVICE TO VETERANS

Amateur station W8BAA located at the Veterans Administration Hospital in Brecksville Ohio fell silent on April 29th after at least 50 years of service to veterans.

The Brecksville VA hospital operations are being moved to the main Cleveland VA hospital and he Brecksville radio club equipment is being transferred to the radio room at that facility.  The club call at the main hospital is WA8VA. (W8KBF)

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NAMES IN THE NEWS:  HAM NATION WITH K9EID PREMIERES MAY 24

Amateur Radio's Mr. Audio, Bob Heil, K9EID, will be hosting a new weekly HD video webcast about our hobby titled Ham Nation.  According to Bob, each weeks Ham Nation will feature interesting guests as they discuss the many fascinating aspects of the hobby.

The shows premiere on May 24th will have famed rock guitarist Joe Walsh, WB6ACU, and broadcast facility designer Dave Jennings, WJ6W, as Bob's special guests.  Jennings is one of the hosts of the Amplitude Modulation International net that meets every Wednesday on 3870 kHz.

Ham Nation will air Tuesday evenings at 9 p.m. Eastern, 8 p.m. Central and 6 p.m. Pacific time on Leo Laporte's TWIT TV Internet network.  To tune in, please take your web browser to live.twit.tv and join the fun. (K9EID)

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BREAK 2

This is ham radio news for today's radio amateur.  From the United States of America, We are the Amateur Radio Newsline with links to the world from our only official website at www.arnewsline.org and being relayed by the volunteer services of the following radio amateur:

(5 sec pause here)

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WORLDBEAT:  RADIO NETHERLANDS UPGRADES MADAGASCAR RELAY STATION

One of the worlds best known shortwave broadcasters is upgrading its relay site in Madagascar.  Felix Scerri, VK4FUQ, of the WIA News is there with the details:

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Radio Netherlands Worldwide management has confirmed the purchase of three  500 kW short-wave transmitters from the recently-closed short-wave site at Horby in Sweden. The transmitters are currently being dismantled for shipment  to RNW's station in Madagascar.

Recently, RNW management announced that it intended to speed up the process of replacing short-wave with other distribution platforms, including the closure of its relay stations in Bonaire and Madagascar. The Bonaire facility is scheduled for closure at the end of October 2012, but no closure date has yet been decided for Madagascar.

However, late last year RNW decided it was time to replace the nearly 40-year-old Philips transmitters at Madagascar. Rather than invest in new transmitters, the opportunity was taken to purchase the three ABB transmitters from the Swedish station at H"rby which was closed at the end  of last year.  These were installed in 1993.

For the WIA News, I'm Felix, VK4FUQ.

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No date has been announced as to when the new transmitters will take to the air from the Radio Netherlands Madagascar relay site.  (WIA News)

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ON THE AIR:  GB6COD TO CELEBRATE COLLINGWOOD OPEN DAY

On the air, the United Kingdom's Royal Naval Amateur Radio Society will run a special event station on the H.M.S. Collingwood on Saturday June 4th.  The callsign to be used is GB6COD which stands for Collingwood Open Day.  The station will be operational on all amateur bands from 1.8MHz through 440 MHz.  The Society headquarters station will also be open for viewing from 9.30am to 6pm the same day.  The open day will also feature the Royal Navy Field Gun Competition.  (GB2RS)

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ON THE AIR:  COMMEMORATING THE TURKISH WAR OF INDEPENDENCE

Two special event stations will be active in May to commemorate the start of the Turkish War of Independence and the 130th anniversary of the birth of Mustafa Kemal Atatrk. Between May 16th and May 22nd listen out for TC130ATA.  On the 18th, 19th and 20th TC1919ATA is the call to look for. QSL each as directed on the air.  (Southgate)

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HAM CELEBRATIONS:  50 YEARS OF IOTA

2014 marks the 50th anniversary of the launch of the Islands On The Air Program by British SWL Geoff Watts.  As a build-up to celebrations on this occasion, the RSGB Islands On The Air Manager and Committee have announced an exciting activity period in which all licensed amateurs world-wide are invited to participate.

For a two-year period during 2012 and 2013, Islands On The Air chasers are encouraged to contact as many different IOTA groups as possible. Also, for hams so inclined to play their part by operating from as many groups as possible, with special emphasis on the less-frequently activated ones.

The complete rules of the Islands On The Air 50th Anniversary Marathon will appear in the  forthcoming RSGB IOTA Directory to be released at the Dayton Hamvention. They can also be on-line at www.g3kma.dsl.pipex.com  (G3KMA)

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DX

In DX, the he Jan Mayen DXpedition led by SQ8X scheduled for July 6th to the 14th  has announced that their callsigbn while on the island will be their group's callsign will be JX5O instead of JX7VPA as first announced.  The DXpedition will focus on 30 through 6 meters operating CW, RTTY, PSK, with some SSB if conditions permit.  Accompanying the operators will be a television production crew is coming to produce a broadcast documentary about the ham radio project and the island. Updated details and QSL route are available janmayen2011 dot org

Members of the Algarve Star DX Team will be active as CR55PQ from the inside of Portuguese Airborne Troops School between May 21st and the 23rd.  This, to celebrate 55 years of operation at this military school.  Operations will be on 80 through 6 meters using CW, SSB and RTTY. QSL to CT1EHX, either via the bureau or direct.

The Radio Club de los Andes reports that its station LU8YE will be on the air on May 20th to the 22nd from Meliquina Lake which is located at 45 Kilometers from the city of San Martin de los Andes.  Operation will be on 80 through 10 meters using SSB and CW.  QSL's for in country contacts go to LU8YE.  DX contacts are via EA7FTR

W5FJG reports that he has been assigned to work on Midway Island as the Chief Communications Officer.  He was scheduled to arrive last week with an Icom IC-7000 but no antenna or power supply.  He says he is working to get this modest station on the air stroke  KH4 and hopes to be on the air no later then June 1st.  His assignment is open ended, and he will be on Midway for at least one year.  Operation should be from 6 through 40 meters on SSB, CW, RTTY and other digital modes.  He says that he will provide a QSL route and operating times at a later date.

Lastly, N5OMG says that the K5N Activation Group will be leaving from Venice on Thursday morning, June 2nd, heading for Grid Square EL58.

This, to activate 6 meters in an all out effort to make this rare grid available to as many operators as they can make contact with. They are hoping to be on the air by noon local time operating all modes up the band a bit on 50.210 Mhz. First up will be a Meteor Scatter attempt followed by all other modes. This operation is slated to last four days. No QSL information is available as we go to air.

(Above from various DX news sources)

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THAT FINAL ITEM: SNAKES ON THE RADIO

And finally this week, the story of a research program that's putting snakes on the radio. Well, kind of. Here's Graham Kemp, VK4BB, of the WIA News with the slithering details:

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Snakes have a face only a mother could love, but that hasn't stopped PhD student Melissa Bruton, from the University of Queensland's School of Geography, Planning and Environmental Management from getting up close and personal.

Melissa was recently awarded a grant by the Wildlife Preservation Society of Queensland to support her research into reptiles in the southern Brigalow Belt region of Queensland and New South Wales.

Melissa has a particular interest in the elusive Woma Python. To do this, she be implanting radio-transmitters into the body cavity of several larger pythons and radio-tracking them for one year each.

After finishing just one summer of trapping Ms Bruton already has eight Woma Pythons to study.

The tracked womas are quite mobile but early indications are that they return to preferred burrow sites. Each Woma will be tracked every second day for a minimum of 12 months so we will know a lot more about these elusive pythons in 12 months' time.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Graham Kemp, VK4BB, of the WIA News reporting from Brisbane Australia.

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Many have seen the movie Snakes on a Plane but snakes on the radio makes a lot more sense. At least in his particular case. (WIA News)

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NEWSCAST CLOSE

With thanks to Alan Labs, AMSAT, the ARRL, the CGC Communicator, CQ Magazine, the FCC, the Ohio Penn DX Bulletin, Radio Netherlands, Rain, the RSGB, the Southgate News and Australia's WIA News, that's all from the Amateur Radio Newsline(tm). Our e-mail address is

Newsline(at)arnewsline(dot)org.  More information is available at Amateur Radio Newsline's(tm) only official website located at www.arnewsline.org.  You can also write to us or support us at Amateur Radio Newsline(tm), 28197 Robin Avenue, Santa Clarita California, 91350

And a reminder that the nominating period for the year 2011 Amateur Radio Newsline Young Ham of the Year Award is now open.  Created by Newsline back in 1986, this award is offered to recognize one young United States or Canadian radio amateur age 18 or younger for his or her contributions to society through Amateur Radio.

As in years past, the 2011 recipient will receive an expense paid trip to the Huntsville Hamfest in Huntsville Alabama courtesy of Vertex-Standard Corporation which produces Yaesu brand amateur radio gear.  Vertex-Standard will also present this years winner with a special ham radio related gift.  CQ Magazine will again treat the recipient to a week at Spacecamp-Huntsville.  We at Amateur Radio Newsline will present the winner with a plaque honoring his or her achievements.

All nominations and materials required by the official rules must be received by ARNewsline before June 30, 2011.  A downloadable nominating form is at our website at www.arnewsline.org.  A nominating form can also be obtained by sending a request along with a self addressed stamped envelope to the Young Ham of the Year Award in care of Amateur Radio Newsline, Inc.  28197 Robin Avenue, Santa Clarita California 91350.

Again, the cutoff date for these years Young Ham of the Year Award nominations is June 30th.  We ask you to do your part by nominating a young ham who has done something special related to ham radio.  The nomination form is at www.arnewsline.org.

For now, with Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, at the editors desk, Jeff Clark, K8JAC, saying 73 and we thank you for listening.

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